

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

- 5 Agents and method are described for inducing apoptosis in normal and diseased cells by antagonizing the interaction between onconeural antigens and apoptosis-inducing proteins, such as transcription factors. The antagonism of the interaction leads to increased bioavailability of the protein, which then directly or indirectly induces cell cycle genes. In dysproliferative cells, such gene activation and induction of cell cycle
- 10 genes leads to apoptosis and death of dysproliferative cells. Therapies are directed to the treatment of diseases such as cancer. Normal cells, such as germ cells, may be treated by the agents to undergo apoptosis, for example, in the induction of sterility. Methods for the identification of suitable agents of the present invention are described by determining the extent of interference of binding between onconeural antigens and
- 15 their fragments and apoptosis-inducing proteins and their fragments, in cell-free and cell-based assays.